

Biblical and Spirit of Prophecy Evidence for Male Headship **By Pastor Stephen Bohr**

‘Head of Headship’

A recent liberal non-denominational publication article referred to me as ‘the head of headship’. I certainly object to this honorary title for two reasons:

- First, as we shall see, headship existed since before creation. It is taught in the Old and New Testaments as well as in the writings of the pioneers and Ellen White. In recent times there are many others who have shared the biblical concept of headship long before I did. Secrets Unsealed through publications and symposiums has simply provided an outlet for the idea to be shared on a global level.
- Second and more importantly, it would be blasphemous for me to claim such a sublime and reverend title when the Bible is clear that the Head of all headships is none other than God the Father. He is the head of headship:

1 Corinthians 11:3

“But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.”

What do we mean by ‘headship’?

One of the problems we have in the discussion on headship is a failure to explain our terms. How does the dictionary define ‘headship’?

- **Webster’s 1828** Edition: “HEAD, to lead; to direct; to act as leader”
- **Headship**: “the position of leader or chief.”
- **Headship**: “the position or state of being a leader.”

So, according to various dictionaries, ‘headship’ and ‘leadership’ are synonymous. Thus the present debate over headship is a matter of semantics. The word ‘headship’ is disliked because we have failed to define what it means! The word is synonymous with leadership. Perhaps leadership is a softer word and therefore it is not rejected as readily.

So what is male headship? Perhaps it will help for us to explain what it does not mean. Male headship or leadership in the home and in the church is not to be understood as the man being the head honcho, the dictator or the boss but as one who is the loving leader.

protector, provider, counselor, guide and loving companion of the wife and of the church members.

Biblical evidences of male headship

It has been argued by egalitarians that the idea of male headship is recent and that it intruded into Adventist theology as the result of the writings of Samuele Bacchiocchi. In a post-modern, equal rights world there are three words that are intensely disliked: Headship, submission and authority.

The Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy provide the following evidence for male headship in the home and in the church:

1: The Godhead

The Seminary document on headship categorically states:

“Scripture also affirms the temporary voluntary functional subordination of Christ the Son in order to accomplish the salvation of humanity.”

But is it true that the submission of Jesus to the Father was temporary and functional only during the period of His incarnation on earth?

The Scriptures indicate that God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ are two distinct persons and yet Jesus explained that in terms of unity they are one (John 10:30). The Son is co-substantial with the Father and yet the evidence indicates that He was subject to the Father’s will even before the creation of the angels and will continue to be subject to the Father’s will in eternity future after sin and death have been eradicated from the universe (1 Corinthians 15:28). Ellen White clearly indicates that Jesus executed the Father’s will when He created the angels:

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 36:

“The King of the universe summoned the heavenly hosts before Him, that in their presence He might set forth the true position of His Son and show the relation He sustained to all created beings. The Son of God shared the Father’s throne, and the glory of the eternal, self-existent One encircled both. . . . Before the assembled inhabitants of heaven the King declared that none but Christ, the Only Begotten of God, could fully enter into His purposes, and to Him it was committed to execute the mighty counsels of His [the Father’s] will. The Son of God had wrought the Father’s will in the creation of all the hosts of heaven; and to Him, as well as to God, their homage and allegiance were due. Christ was still to exercise divine power, in the creation of the earth and its inhabitants. But in all this He would not seek power or exaltation for Himself contrary to God’s plan, but would exalt the Father’s glory and execute His purposes of beneficence and love.”

The evidence of the Father’s headship before the incarnation is too clear to be misunderstood. Father is referred to as ‘the King of the universe’. The Father committed

the Son to ‘execute the mighty counsels of **His will**’. The Son wrought ‘the **Father’s will** in the creation of the hosts of heaven’. He exalted ‘the **Father’s glory**’ and executed ‘**His purposes**’.

The Role of Adam

The **Seminary document** makes the following bold statement:

*“**No inspired writer teaches** the headship of man over woman **at the Creation**. Rather, Genesis 1 teaches us that male and female participate equally in the image of God, with **no hint of pre-fall subordination of one to the other** (Gen 1:27).”*

We would certainly agree that both Adam and Eve were created in the image of God. Yet the Seminary statement leaves the distinct impression that the image of God required Adam and Eve to be co-heads. Ellen White begs to differ. **It was Adam**, not Adam and Eve, who was the head or leader. Ellen White refers to Adam as ‘the head’, the ‘monarch’, the ‘father and representative’, the ‘lord’, the ‘king’ and the ‘rightful sovereign’:

*“Under God, Adam was to stand at **the head** of the earthly family, to maintain the principles of the heavenly family” (CT 33; 6T 236)*

*“Adam was appointed by God to be **monarch** of the world, under the **supervision** of the Creator” (BE, Aug 28, 1899; cf. ST Apr.29, 1875; see also RH, Feb 24, 1874)*

*“The Sabbath was committed to Adam, the **father and representative** of the whole human family” (PP 48)*

*“Adam was **lord** in his beautiful domain” (FE 38)*

*“**Adam was crowned king** in Eden. To him was given dominion over every living thing that God had created. The Lord blessed Adam and Eve with intelligence such as He had not given to any other creature. He made **Adam the rightful sovereign** over all the works of His hands” (SDABC 1:1078)*

2: Man was created first

Genesis 2:7

*“And the Lord God **formed man** of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.”*

Someone might ask: **What difference** does it make that man was created first and then woman? How did this make Adam the head? The apostle **Paul**, who was **just as inspired**, as was Moses, harking back to the creation account [1] **before sin** and before the [2] **encroachments of culture**, explained that the woman is **not allowed to teach** or to **have authority** over the man because the man was **created first** and then woman:

1 Timothy 2:12, 13

*"And I do not permit a woman to teach or to **have authority** over a man, but to be in silence.*

*¹³ For Adam was **formed first**, then Eve.*

Paul's rationale for the submission of woman to the legitimate authority of male leaders in an **ecclesiastical leadership** setting is based on the **creation order** and not on **culture** or the **fall**.

The non-Adventist **Teacher's Commentary** captures well the role that God has reserved for men:

*"1 Tim 2:11-15 does not teach that women cannot exercise their spiritual gifts when the body meets. We know that women can, and are to **[exercise their spiritual gifts]** (Acts 2:17; 1 Corinthians 12:7; 14:26). Instead the passage has a more **narrow focus**, on the role of a **ruling elder**. To 'teach' (1 Tim 2:12), as defined 'with authority' is an **elder's function**. This particular function in the body of Christ and only this function - is **reserved for men**." *The Teacher's Commentary* Copyright © 1987 by Chariot Victor Publishing*

3: Woman taken from man

Third, the **manner** of Eve's creation suggests that she was to be **submissive** to her husband's loving headship:

Genesis 2:21, 22

*"And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. Then the rib which the Lord God had **taken from man** He made into a woman, and He brought her **to the man**."*

The **creation account** explicitly affirms that the woman was taken **from the man**. Some may protest: *"How does this prove the idea of male headship?"* The answer is simple. If we had only the Genesis account we might be able to say that the manner of Eve's creation had nothing to do with the issue of headship. But the apostle Paul, who was **as inspired as Moses**, clearly stated that the woman should be submissive to the headship of the man in a **church worship** setting because *"man did not come from woman, but woman from man."*

1 Corinthians 11:8:

As in the case of **1 Timothy 2:11, 12**, Paul's rationale for the willing submission of woman to man's loving headship in an ecclesiastical setting is based on the **creation order** that was established by God at the beginning and not on **culture** or on **the fall**.

In the Bible, **origin and authority** are closely related. For example, Jesus is pre-eminent and above all creation because He **pre-existed it** and brought it **into existence**. Jesus is described as the **Head of the body** because He brought the church into existence and sustains it (Colossians 1:15-18).

By way of analogy, **children** are required to render **respect and obedience** to their parents' authority because they **derived their existence** from them. In a similar manner, Adam was the **source of Eve** and as such she owed him **submissive and loving respect** as her head.

4: Eve was created to be man's helper

According to the creation account, Eve was made to be **man's helper** and not he hers:

*"And the Lord God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will **make him a helper** comparable to him."*

1 Corinthians 11:9

The apostle Paul, under inspiration and referring back to the **pre-fall** Genesis account, explained that the woman is to be submissive to the man in an **ecclesiastical worship setting** because Eve was created to be man's helper. In his words, *"neither was man created for woman, but **woman for man.**"*

It will be noticed once again that Paul's argument here is based on the pre-fall **creation order** and not on the **fall** or on **culture**.

Women's ordination advocates have gone to great lengths in an attempt to prove that the word 'helper' does **not contain the idea of submission**. In fact, they point out that it is used most frequently in the Old Testament to refer to **God helping man**, that is, a **superior helping an inferior**. So it is argued that if anything, the **woman is superior to the man** as his helper. But this argument is flawed for several reasons.

First, the word 'helper' as it is used **in reference to God** clearly applies to one who is greater than man. God is **eternal and infinite** and we are **time-bound and finite**. It bears noting that most of the times that the word "helper" is used of God helping man it is in a context where man is in serious trouble and needs God's intervention to help him escape his predicament. If a person is sinking in quick sand and cries out "help!" would not the helper be greater than the one who is helped? Of course! The relationship of God to man is clearly that of a **greater to a lesser** by His **very nature** but the same is not true of the relationship between the man and the woman.

The logic of the egalitarians is seriously flawed because it **contradicts the clear words** of the apostle Paul. In Paul's estimation it is true that woman and man were created by God as **equals** and yet he makes it crystal clear that functionally the woman was **made to help the man** and not vice-versa and for this reason she should willingly submit to the authority of the man.

An assistant to the **president of a large conference** on the West Coast of the United States who favors women's ordination asked the question: *'Did God create woman with the intent that she be a **lesser order of humanity?**'*

The context of the administrator's question is important. He is dealing specifically with the fact that the woman was created to be man's helper. He states: *'In our English language, the word 'helper' carries with it the suggestion of lesser to greater. But the Hebrew does not carry such meaning.'*

The assistant, as is frequent with egalitarians, has built a **straw man** as tall as **Nebuchadnezzar's image**. First of all, **complementarians** do not believe that the word 'helper' in Genesis means that the woman was made to be a **'lesser order of humanity'**. This is a mere **caricature** of their view. What complementarians do believe is that woman was **created equal** to man but with a **different function**. She was made to complement man, not man to complement her. The Genesis account and the apostle Paul are both **crystal clear on this point**.

Further, is it true that in our English language the word 'helper' carries with it the suggestion of lesser to greater'? Not always. Two beings can be **equal in status, dignity and value** as **persons** and yet one can be the other's helper.

On a **human level** the word 'helper' can be understood in **two different ways**. A mother can tell her daughter to help her set the table. Although the mother and daughter are equal as beings, the 'helper' is subject to the mother's authority. This would be the case of a lesser helping a greater. On the other hand a parent may help a child with his homework. Even though the parent is the 'helper', the child is under the parent's authority. This would be the case of a greater helping a lesser. In at least one case, the word 'helper' is used in Scripture to describe a **lesser helping a greater** (**Ezekiel 12:14**).

On a divine level the same is true. Even before sin came into the universe **Jesus was the Father's helper**. He executed the Father's will in the creation of the heavenly hosts and Adam and Eve. According to the Spirit of Prophecy, he was **next in authority** to the Father. His Father placed Him as the commander of the angelic hosts. Does this mean that the Son was inferior to the Father in eternity past? Does this mean that Jesus was a **lesser order of deity**?

The simple fact is that though the Father and the Son are **equal as persons**, the Son is the Father's helper. In the plan of salvation, the **Father did not come to earth** to battle the tempter, to suffer and to die. Jesus **helped the Father** accomplish the work of redemption by doing His **Father's will**. Did this make Jesus **'a lesser being'** than the Father? Does the fact that Jesus helps His Father make Him a **lesser divinity**? Of course not! According to Jesus **the greatest** in the kingdom is the one who condescends **to serve and help**. And yet, would the condescension of the Son make Him **greater than the Father**? Of course not because Jesus said: *'The Father is greater than I.'*

In the early church, the **seven deacons** were elected to **help the apostles** with the administrative matters of the growing church. Were the **deacons inferior** to the apostles as persons? Of course not! No doubt the deacons **followed the leadership** of the apostles and yet as **human beings** in the sight of God they **were equal**. They were **subordinate in function** because they were ordained to **help the apostles** but they were not a **'lesser**

order of humanity' to use the administrative assistant's words. In short, the deacons were the apostles' helpers but they were not inferior to them.

5: Adam was created taller than Eve

The Spirit of Prophecy provides us with a significant tidbit of information—God created Adam a little taller than Eve:

"Eve was not quite as tall as Adam. Her head reached a little above his shoulders." Signs of the Times, January 9, 1879

When I presented this point at a recent meeting, a pastor who was sitting on the front row responded with a sarcastic smile and a rolling of the eyes. The question is: **Why did God create Adam taller than Eve?** Would not strict egalitarianism require them to be the exact same size? Some might think that this original height difference was only for aesthetic purposes, but upon closer inspection, we shall see that in God's original order, height difference is related to authority.

Ellen White explains elsewhere in her writings that tall angels stand at the head of companies and have commanding authority over the shorter ones. Notice the examples that follow:

When Lucifer prepared for war against Christ we are told that:

"The angels were marshaled in companies, each division with a higher commanding angel at their head." 1SP 23

When Jesus was arrested by the mob in Gethsemane we are told that:

"Many companies of holy angels, each with a tall commanding angel at their head, were sent to witness the scene." EW 168

As God's people are crying out for deliverance in the final time of Jacob's trouble we are told that the angels wished to intervene to deliver them:

"But a tall, commanding angel suffered them not. He said, 'The will of God is not yet fulfilled. They must drink of the cup. They must be baptized with the baptism.'" EW 272

Regarding the physical height of Jesus before He came to this world we are told:

"Before Christ left heaven and came into the world to die, He was taller than any of the angels. He was majestic and lovely." 7BC 904

Yet when Jesus took the form of a servant, "He was but little taller than the common size of men then living upon the earth." 7BC 904

When Jesus ascended to heaven He was restored by His Father to His original height (4aSG 119). Ellen White describes the physical size of Jesus when the saints will finally enter the Holy City:

"He stood head and shoulders above the saints and above the angels." EW 288

Someone might object: If height difference is a defining point in the matter of headship, would not shorter men today be under the authority of taller women? A moment's reflection will reveal that this question is misguided. It is obvious that sin has affected the physical stature of both men and women, but this does not mean that God's original, pre-fall statement concerning height difference is inconsequential. If Adam and Eve had not sinned, the height difference would have been passed on to their descendants.

6: Adam named Eve

Despite egalitarian claims to the contrary, the creation story indicates that before the entrance of sin into the world, Adam gave Eve the name 'woman'.

Genesis 2:23:

Adam said: "She shall be called woman because she was taken out of man"

In the Bible, giving names is an exercise of authority. King Nebuchadnezzar exercised his authority when he gave the four Hebrew worthies names (Daniel 1:7). God the Father exercised His authority when He gave Jesus the name that is above every name (Philippians 2:9-11). Parents name their children because they brought them into existence and therefore have authority over them. Even before sin, Adam, not Eve, was entrusted with the task of naming the animals that he had been given dominion over (Genesis 2:19, 20).

7: The man was commanded to take the initiative in leaving father and mother in marriage

Genesis 2:24

"Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh."

8: God commanded Adam not to eat from the tree, not Eve

Even before the creation of the woman, God had commanded Adam not to eat from the forbidden tree. There is no indication in the story that God gave this command directly to Eve. The Genesis story seems to indicate that Adam was expected to relay this information to his wife:

Genesis 2:15-17

"Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and keep it. 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

This '**chain of command**' should not surprise us. It follows the **basic pattern** of **how God speaks His will**. In Scripture the **Father speaks** His will through the Son:

*"He [Christ] was the commander of all Heaven. He imparted **to the angelic family** the high commands of his Father."* *Spiritual Gifts*, volume 3, p. 36)

The **Son then speaks** through the Spirit, the **Spirit speaks** through the angels, the **angels speak** through the prophets and the prophets then **relay God's message** to the people and the people are to relay it to the world (see **Revelation 1:1-3**).

Let me give you an example of how this **mode of communication** functions on a **human level**. I am the president of Secrets Unsealed and as such it is my role to provide **general oversight and supervision** to the ministry. When I have important information to share with the employees I meet with the **department heads** and share the information with them and then I expect them to **share it with the employees** that are under their leadership. The word of the department heads is **really my word** and the employees who are under the department heads are **expected to follow** my instructions even though they did not hear them directly from me.

In the same way, God spoke His **instructions to Adam** who was expected in turn to **relay them to Eve**. In this way, Eve was expected to **obey God's word** through the **instrumentality of Adam**. Adam's word was to be considered God's word. Genesis 3 indicates that **Eve understood** this chain of command when she said to the serpent: *"God has said . . ."*

In Biblical thought, when God gives a **command to the husband**, he is expected to teach his **entire family** to obey the command because he, as the spiritual leader, is the **head of the family**. For example, God said about Abraham:

Genesis 18:19

*"For I have known him, in order that he may **command his children and his household** after him, that they keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and justice, that the Lord may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him."*

Does God expect anything less from husbands today? **Before** Adam and Eve sinned we are told that:

*"The Sabbath was committed **to Adam**, the father and representative of the whole human family"* *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 48

Notice that God did not commit the Sabbath to **Adam and Eve**, the **father and mother** of the human family! He committed it to Adam. Does the fact that the Sabbath was committed to Adam mean that **God did not expect Eve to keep it**? To the contrary! Ellen White states that it was given to and for both:

*"God saw that a Sabbath was essential for **Adam and Eve**, even in Paradise. In giving **them** the Sabbath, God considered their spiritual and physical health." Christ Triumphant, p. 18*

How are we to understand that the Sabbath was **given to Adam**, the **father and representative** of the human race and yet it was also given to Eve? Is Ellen White talking out of **both sides of her mouth**? Of course not! Clearly the Sabbath was given to Adam as the father and representative of the whole human family and as the spiritual leader, he was **expected to teach his wife and successive generations** its meaning and the importance of its observance. Regarding this responsibility Ellen White explains:

*"**Adam** carefully treasured what God had revealed to him, and **handed it down** by **word of mouth** to his children and children's children." Spirit of Prophecy, volume 1, p. 59*

9: The woman fell and led the man into transgression

Besides providing several pre-fall arguments, Paul also provided several **post-fall rationales** for the submission of the woman to the authority of the man.

1 Timothy 2:13, 14

*"And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. ¹³ For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And **Adam was not deceived**, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression."*

Samuele Bacchiocchi has stated correctly:

*"Adam willingly let his wife **take the lead** . . . She **usurped Adam's headship** and instead of being his helper to live as God intended she led him into sin . . . Adam failed to exercise his spiritual leadership by **protecting Eve** from the serpent's deception, and, on her part, Eve failed to respect her **submissive role** by staying by her husband's side . . . The great fault of Adam in the Fall was his failure to exercise his role of **spiritual leadership**. Instead of leading his wife into obedience to God's command, he **allowed his wife** to lead him into disobedience." Prove All Things, pp. 83, 84*

Ellen White hints at the headship of Adam when she affirmed that Adam 'mourned that he had **permitted** Eve to wander from his side'. PP 56

10: God required an accounting from Adam before Eve

In spite of the fact that Eve sinned first, God **required an accounting from Adam** before Eve:

Genesis 3:8-11

*"And **they** heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and **Adam and his wife** hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. 9 Then the Lord God **called to Adam [with the definite article]** and said to **him**, "Where are you?" 10 So **he** said, "**I** heard Your voice in the garden, and **I** was afraid because **I***

was naked; and **I** hid myself." 11 And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?"

The critical question is this: If Eve was the first to sin, why didn't God hold **her initially responsible?** Why did God address Adam first? The words of God to Adam are too clear to be misunderstood:

Genesis 3:16:

"Because you have heeded the voice of your wife [by implication, 'instead of Mine'], and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it.'"

The insinuation seems to be that **Adam should have listened to God's voice** and Eve in turn should have listened to the voice of her husband, her protector. Thus, **by obeying Adam**, Eve would have been **obeying God**.

Basically God was saying to Adam:

"I commanded you not to eat from the tree and gave you the responsibility of making sure your wife obeyed my command. Instead, you relinquished your leadership role by obeying your wife's voice instead of mine."

I believe that this chain of command helps us better understand what Paul meant when he wrote that **God is the head** of Christ, **Christ is the head** of the man and **man is the head** of the woman (1 Corinthians 11:3).

Jesus first receives information from His Father who is **His head** and then **relays** the information the man as his head. Ellen White has profoundly stated:

"What speech is to thought, so is Christ to the invisible Father. He is the manifestation of the Father, and is called the Word of God." 5BC 1131

The next link in the chain of command is when **man receives the information** from Christ and relays it to the woman. In other words, when the man is **subject to the headship of Christ** he will in turn exercise a **Christ-centered headship** of the woman and in this way she will be under the **headship of Christ through the witness of the man**.

But Adam **broke the chain** of command. Instead of exercising loving headship for his wife by relaying what Christ had relayed to him, Adam **relinquished his leadership role** to her and obeyed **her voice**, which in turn led him into transgression. So to speak, **Eve usurped the headship position** of Christ over the man and as a result the man disobeyed Christ. In short, instead of the **woman obeying Christ through the man**, the man **obeyed his wife** and thus **disobeyed his head, Christ**.

This idea is further bolstered by God's words to Eve after her transgression:

Genesis 3:16

"Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."

Was this declaration by God a **confirmation** of a reality that had existed before the fall, or was it a **divine sentence** pronounced upon woman by God only after the fall? Expressed another way, was Eve's desire for her husband and her husband's rulership over her a **less than ideal** arrangement that **kicked in after the fall** or was it a reaffirmation of **God's original plan** albeit in a less than desirable **sinful environment**?

The answer to this question is found in **Genesis 4:7** where the identical two words 'desire' and 'rule' appear in the story of Cain and Abel.

All Bible versions that I have consulted translate Genesis 4:7 in similar fashion. Let's take the **NIV** as an example. God says to Cain:

*"If you [**Cain**] do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it [**sin**] **desires** to have you, but you must **master** it [**sin**]."*

It will be noticed that the NIV as well as other versions **personify sin as a crouching beast desiring** to dominate Cain but Cain is instructed to **rule over it**.

The **KJV** provides a different perspective:

Genesis 4:7 (KJV)

*"If thou [**Cain**] doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee [**Cain**] shall be **his** [**Abel's**] desire, and thou [**Cain**] shalt rule over **him** [**over Abel**]."*

Ellen White agrees with the contextual translation of the KJV:

*"Abel's offering had been accepted; but this was because he had done in every particular as God required him to do. If Cain would correct his error, he would not be deprived of his **birthright**: Abel would not only **love him** [**his desire would be for Cain**] as his brother, but, **as the younger**, would be **subject to him** [**he would lovingly be subject to his brother**]. Thus the Lord declared to Cain, "Unto thee shall be his **desire**, and thou shalt **rule** over him." *Bible Echo*, April 8, 1912*

It will be noticed that Ellen White explains the meaning of the word 'desire' (used only in **Genesis 3:16; 4:7; and Song of Solomon 7:10**) as 'love' and the word 'rule' as willing submission of the **younger** to the **older**.

This translation lends support to Paul's statement that before the fall Adam was to rule over his wife because he was **created first and then Eve**. She was **younger** and he was older. She, on the other hand, was to lovingly submit to her husband because he was older and she was younger.

Thus the desire and willing submission of the younger to the older existed both **before and after sin** and provides one rationale for female submission to the headship of man. Since the very beginning of history the younger son was to **willingly be subject** to the loving rulership of the older son. And Adam, who was created first, was to **rule over his wife** who

was created second. As stated before, this does not mean that woman was ontologically inferior to man nor that Abel was ontologically inferior to Cain.

11: Nakedness was not experienced until Adam sinned

When Eve ate the fruit and she approached Adam we are told that she had not experienced the consequences of the fall:

*"Eve was before him, just as lovely and beautiful, and apparently as innocent, as before this act of disobedience. She expressed greater, higher love for him than before her disobedience, as the effects of the fruit she had eaten. He saw in her no signs of death." (*The Story of Redemption*, p. 36)*

After Adam sinned nakedness ensued:

Genesis 3:9-10

*"Then the LORD GOD called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?" **10** So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself."*

12: After sin Adam named Eve again

After the entrance of sin into the world, Adam once again took the leadership initiative by naming his wife:

Genesis 3:20

"And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living."

13: Paul explicitly stated that the man is the head of the woman

In 1 Corinthians 11:3 we are clearly told:

"God is the head of Christ, Christ is the head of the man and the man is the head of the woman."

Notice that Paul does not say that the man was the head of the woman after sin entered the world and until Jesus died on the cross. The husband was still the head of the wife even when Paul wrote many years after the cross.

Some women's ordination lobbyists have attempted to soften or even eliminate the idea that the husband is the head of the woman by arguing that the word 'head' here means 'source' or 'origin'. One seminary student went so far as to suggest that the word 'head' means 'completion'. This is how the ordination advocate tortuously explained it:

"As Christ is the enabler (the one who brings to completion) of the church, so the husband is to enable (bring to completion) all that his wife is meant to be"

This is certainly a **novel private interpretation** that denotes an extreme case of *eisegesis* (reading into the text one's personal opinion). Contrary to the **clear text** of Genesis, this explanation makes **Adam Eve's helper** rather than the other way around. Not a **single lexicon** provides 'completion' as a possible meaning of the word and **not a single Bible version** translates it this way! In fact the **God's Word Translation** renders the word 'head' as 'authority':

"However, I want you to realize that Christ has authority over every man, a husband has authority over his wife, and God has authority over Christ."

Evangelical scholar **Wayne Grudem**, who has dedicated the better part of his career to research and write about the women's ordination issue, has done an exhaustive study of the word **kephale** in the **LXX, Plato, the New Testament, Josephus, Philo, Plutarch and the church fathers** (*Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, pp. 552-559) and he has found that the word does indeed mean 'head'. It would be very enlightening indeed for egalitarians to **digest the persuasive evidence** that has been provided by Grudem.

Several texts from the writings of Paul and Peter clearly reveal that the word **kephale** is used to denote **authority/headship** (see Ephesians 1:22; 5:23, 24; Colossians 1:18; 2:10; I Peter 2:7). Bible words should not be treated like **play dough** that can be molded to **take the shape** that the interpreter wishes them to have.

Notably, the apostle Paul in the well-known marriage passage links the word **kephale** (head) with **hupotasso** (submit).

Ephesians 5:22-24:

*"Wives, **submit [hupotasso]** to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is **head** of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is **subject [hupotasso]** to Christ, so let the wives be **[subject]** to their own husbands in everything" (see also Colossians 3:18; I Corinthians 14:33-35; Titus 2:4, 5).*

According to Greek lexicons the word **hupotasso** means 'to be subject, subordinate, place under.' In the light of this meaning, would anyone dare say that wives are not instructed by God to be subject to their husbands after the cross? (See 1 Peter 3:1, 5).

If wives were not required to be subject to their husbands then **the church would not be expected to be subject to Christ either** because the willing submission of the wife to the husband is **predicated on the willing submission of the church to Christ**.

The **Jewish Bible Commentary** makes a good point regarding the meaning of 1 Corinthians 11:3. It correctly suggests that if **Jesus** does not find the headship of His Father demeaning and if **the man** does not consider the headship of Jesus demeaning, then **wives** should not find the headship of their husbands demeaning either!

The fundamental problem is that in this **sinful world** we consider **subjection to be a negative thing**. We assume that those who **submit or subject** themselves to the authority

of another **are inferior** to the one to whom they subject themselves. If this were the case, then the **subjection of Jesus to His Father** after sin is **eradicated from the universe** would be a **bad thing** (see 1 Corinthians 15:24-28) and yet the New Testament presents it in a **positive light**. To be subject to God's established order is sublime and to **refuse is rebellion**! The story of **Lucifer's rebellion** is a living illustration of this fact.

It is common for egalitarians to argue based on **Ephesians 5:21** that submission is a **two way street** with the husband equally submitting to his wife and the wife to the husband in a perfect egalitarian fashion. After all, the apostle Paul did write:

*"Submitting yourselves **one to another** in the fear of God." **KJV***

But there are several reasons why this egalitarian **argument is faulty**.

First of all, this arrangement would **not be practical** in daily life and therefore does not **make any sense**. What is the meaning of **mutual submission**? Can there really be any **authority structure** when two individuals mutually submit to one another?

Are we to think that Paul was saying that submission is a **two-way street** between **parents and children** in which **parents should submit** to the authority of their children and children to their parents? Are we to think that Paul was saying that **masters and slaves** should be mutually submissive to one another? Are the **commanding angels** in heaven mutually submissive to the angels that they command? Is God the Father and God the Son **mutually submissive** to one another?

Second, the idea of mutual submission does **not agree with the immediate context**. Verses 22, 24 clearly state that it is the **wife who should** submit to the authority of her husband, not the other way around.

Third, in **other passages** the apostle makes it absolutely clear that it is wives who **should be submissive** to the authority of their husbands (Colossians 3:18; Titus 2:5; 1 Peter 3:1-6). **Never, not even once**, do we find any text in the New Testament that indicates that **husbands are to be subject** to their wives.

Fourth, this is a **novel interpretation** of the text unknown until the **feminist movement** in recent times.

Fifth, verse 21 is the introduction to the **succeeding context**. The KJV captures the correct meaning of the expression 'one to another': *"Submitting yourselves **one to another** in the fear of God."*

What is meant by the expression 'one to another'? Does it mean **mutual submission**? Not according to the succeeding context. The following context explains what the expression means:

"The wife (one) should submit to the husband (another)" (Ephesians 5:22, 24)

"The children (one) should submit to their parents (another)" (Ephesians 6:1-3)

“The servant (one) should submit to his master (another)” (Ephesians 6:5-8)

But submission does not mean slavery. Along with the idea of submission the apostle provides **mitigating factors** to **regulate the authority** of husbands, parents and masters. Husbands are **to love** their wives and thus they are not at liberty to mistreat them (Ephesians 5:25-33). Parents are **not to provoke** their children to wrath by abusing their parental authority (Ephesians 6: 4) and masters are not to use their authority **to threaten their servants** because they too are servants of Christ (Ephesians 6:9)

Sixth, the submission of wives to their husbands is predicated upon the **submission of the church to Christ** (Ephesians 5:24). Are we to understand that Christ and the church are to be **mutually submissive**? The idea is **preposterous**. The church is under the authority of Christ and receives **orders from Him** as its head.

Seventh, the meaning of the Greek word **hupotasso** must be taken into account. Some egalitarians **redefine** this word in this one verse giving it a **different definition** than where it is found elsewhere in the New Testament. Whereas according to the lexicons the word means ‘to submit, to be subject to someone’s authority’ some egalitarians have **redefined** the word in Ephesians 5:21 to mean ‘to be considerate and thoughtful of someone’ or ‘to put someone else’s interests first’. Needless to say, **no lexicon** gives such definitions of the word.

The word *hupotasso* is used **38 times** in the New Testament and always refers to one party being in subjection to another. Notice just a few examples of the use of *hupotasso*:

- **Jesus** was subject to the authority of His father and mother (Luke 2:51)
- **Demons** were subject to the authority of the apostles (Luke 10:17)
- **Citizens** are subject to the ruling authorities (Romans 13:1-5)
- When the great controversy is over, **Jesus will subject** Himself to the Father (1 Corinthians 15:28)
- **Church members** are called upon to be subject to the authority of the elders (1 Peter 5:5)
- The **church** must be subject to Christ (Ephesians 5:24)
- **Servants** should submit to the authority of their masters (Titus 2:9)
- God has **placed everything** in subjection to Christ (Hebrews 2:8)
- **Angels, authorities and powers** are in subjection to Christ upon His ascension to heaven (1 Peter 3:22)
- As we submit to our earthly father so we should **submit to our heavenly Father** (Hebrews 12:9)
- **Christians** should submit themselves to God (Hebrews 12:9)

Finally, Ellen White has clearly defined ‘mutual submission’:

*“The husband is **the head of the family**, as Christ is the **head of the church**; and any course which the wife may pursue to lessen his influence and lead him to come down from that*

dignified, responsible position is displeasing to God. It is the duty of the wife to yield her wishes and will to her husband. Both should be yielding, but the Word of God gives preference to the judgment of the husband. And it will not detract from the dignity of the wife to yield to him whom she has chosen to be her counselor, adviser, and protector. The husband should maintain his position in his family with all meekness, yet with decision." 1T 307, 308

14: Adam was held accountable for the entrance of sin not Eve

Romans 5:12-21 explicitly points out that Adam was held accountable by God for the entrance of sin into the world, not Eve (see also I Corinthians 15:22, 45-47) and therefore Jesus, as the head of the human race is the second Adam, not the second Eve.

Romans 5:12

"Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned."

1 Corinthians 15:22

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive."

As we have seen, Ellen White uses several different terms to describe the leadership position of Adam upon his creation. She refers to him as the king, the ruler and the monarch of the world. Never do we find Ellen White describing Adam and Eve as the kings, the rulers and the monarchs of the world. In fact, Ellen White describes Eve as Adam's queen.

At creation, Adam was installed as king and as such he was the head and representative of the entire human family (FLB 32; PP 67). After sin Adam lost his throne (PP 67) and Jesus became a man, conquered Satan in Adam's place and became the new head and representative of the human race (ST, January 16, 1986) until Adam is reinstituted in his first dominion when the two Adams meet (GC 647)

15: The death sentence was pronounced against the man, not the woman

Even though both Adam and Eve came under the sentence of death because of sin, the sentence was only pronounced upon the man:

Genesis 3:19

*"In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground [**Eve was not taken out of the ground**], for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return."*

16: The man was cast out of the Garden of Eden and along with him the woman

Although both the man and the woman were cast out of the Garden, Scripture only mentions the banishment of the man:

Genesis 3:22-24

"Then the LORD God said: "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever" ²³ therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. ²⁴ So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the Garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life."

17: Ellen White confirmed that male headship in the home qualifies a man for spiritual headship in the church

Some egalitarians refuse to accept that the husband is the head of the wife in the context of the home. The Seminary document seems to accept that the husband is the head of the wife in the home but it claims that this arrangement does not transfer to the church:

"... neither Scripture nor the writings of Ellen White endorse any transfer of the role of head in the home to roles within the Church body."

Ellen White makes it crystal clear that the husband is still the head of the wife. As I pointed out earlier, Ellen White has repeatedly confirmed that male headship in the home did not cease at the cross. It is still God's plan that the husband be the head of the wife in the family relationship:

"The Lord has constituted the husband the head of the wife to be her protector; he is the house-band of the family, binding the members together, even as Christ is the head of the church and the Savior of the mystical body. Let every husband who claims to love God carefully study the requirements of God in his position. Christ's authority is exercised in wisdom, in all kindness and gentleness; so let the husband exercise his power and imitate the great Head of the church." Counsels to the Church, pp. 145, 146

From this statement we can reach several inevitable conclusions.

First, if it were true that the husband is no longer the head of the wife then Christ would no longer the head of the church because the headship of the husband over the wife is predicated upon the headship of Christ over the church!

Second, it is important to note that Ellen White is clearly alluding to Ephesians 5:31-33. In these verses Paul is not arguing from a plan 'B' post-fall perspective but rather from God's original pre-creation plan as can be seen by his reference to Genesis 2:24. Clearly,

in some way, the pre-fall relationship between husband and wife is a **model for the relationship** between Christ and His church:

*"For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning **Christ and the church**. Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband."*

Finally, if the **church does not feel oppressed** by the loving headship of Christ then, why would the **wife feel oppressed** by the loving headship of her husband?

But the big question is this: Is the headship of man in the home applicable in the **church as well**? The Seminary document categorically answers 'no'! But what do the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy teach?

First Timothy 3:1-6

*"This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, **the husband of one wife**, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; one who **rules his own house well**, having his **children in submission** with all reverence (for if a man does not know how to **rule his own house**, how will he **take care of the church** of God?)."*

Titus 1:5-9

*"For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should **set in order** the things that are lacking, and appoint **elders in every city** as I commanded you—if a man is blameless, the **husband of one wife**, having **faithful children** not accused of dissipation or insubordination. For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict."*

*"**He** who is engaged in the work of the gospel ministry must be faithful in **his** family life. It is as essential that as a **father he** should improve the talents God has given **him** for the purpose of making the **home** a symbol of the heavenly family, as that in the work of the ministry, **he** should make use of **his** God given powers to win souls for the **church**. As the **priest** in the **home**, and as the ambassador of Christ in the **church**, **he** should exemplify in **his** life the character of Christ. **He** must be faithful in watching for souls as one that must give an account. In **his** service there must be seen no carelessness and inattentive work. God will not serve with the sins of **men** who have not a clear sense of the sacred responsibility involved in accepting a position as **pastor of a church**. **He** who fails to be a faithful, discerning shepherd in the **home**, will surely fail of being a faithful **shepherd of the flock** of God in the **church**." Manuscript 42, 1903, pp. 1, 2 ("The Training of Children," typed May 4, 1903) 6MR 49*

*"The family of the one suggested for office should be considered. Are they in subjection? Can the **man** rule **his** own house with honor? What character do **his** children have? Will they do*

honor to the father's influence? If he has no tact, wisdom, or power of godliness at home in managing his own family, it is safe to conclude that the same defects will be carried into the church, and the same unsanctified management will be seen there. It will be far better to criticize the man before he is put into office than afterward, better to pray and counsel before taking the decisive step than to labor to correct the consequences of a wrong move." 5T 618

"The qualifications of an elder are plainly stated by the apostle Paul: "If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God, not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." 5MR 449

If a man does not show wisdom in the management of the church in his own house, how can he show wisdom in the management of the larger church outside? How can he bear the responsibilities which mean so much, if he cannot govern his own children? Wise discrimination is not shown in this matter. God's blessing will not rest upon the minister who neglects the education and training of his children. He has a sacred trust, and he should in no case set before church members a defective example in the management of his home." 5MR 449 (1901)

"That family, properly conducted, is a favorable argument to the truth, and the head of such a family will carry out the very same kind of work in the church as is revealed in the family. Wherever severity, harshness, and want of affection and love are exhibited in the sacred circle of the home, there will most assuredly be a failure in the plans and management in the church." *Evangelism*, p. 342

It must be pointed out that Ellen White also warned husbands not to abuse their headship role by constantly reminding their wives of their position of authority:

"It is no evidence of manliness in the husband for him to dwell constantly upon his position as head of the family. It does not increase respect for him to hear him quoting Scripture to sustain his claims to authority. It will not make him more manly to require his wife, the mother of his children, to act upon his plans as if they were infallible." AA 360

Biblical Silence on Ordination Gender

It is claimed that the Bible neither approves nor forbids the ordination of women. This may be technically true but the pattern of male leadership in the Bible is broad and clear:

- God the Father is the Head of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:3)
- Adam was given the headship role at creation before sin to reflect the relationship between the Father and the Son in the Godhead (Genesis 1:26)
- After sin God reaffirmed the leadership position of Adam by instructing the woman that the man would rule over her (Genesis 3:16)

- The **Messiah's genealogy** is always traced through the male lineage (Genesis 5, Genesis 11, Matthew 1)
- After sin the **first-born males** were given the birthright and spiritual leadership in the home. This patriarchal system was a blessing, not a curse as many today portray it:

*"This patriarchal system of government Abraham endeavored to perpetuate, as it tended to **preserve the knowledge of God**" (PP 141).*

*"It was a **wise arrangement**, which God Himself had made, **to cut off His people**, so far as possible, from connection with the heathen" (PP 141)*

- The **twelve founders** of Israel were all males
- The regional leaders of **thousands**, hundreds, fifties and tens in Israel were males
- The **seventy elders** chosen by Moses were all males
- All the **priests** of Israel were males (equivalent to the elders)
- All the **Levites** were males (equivalent to the deacons)
- The **42 kings** of Israel and Judah were all males
- The **genealogy of Christ** is traced through His male ancestors
- The **twelve Apostles** were all males
- The **seventy** that Jesus chose to preach were all males
- The successor of **Judas** was chosen from **two males** that had been chosen from a larger **pool** of males (*adelfoi*)
- The **seven deacons** were males
- **Paul and Barnabas** were males
- The Apostles and elders who attended the **Jerusalem council** were males
- Paul's criteria for bishop and elder was '**husband of one wife**'
- **Timothy and Titus** were both ordained and were males
- There was **not a single** female apostle, deacon or elder in the New Testament
- There is no clear New Testament evidence that women were ordained as apostles, elders or deacons in the apostolic church

Ellen White has pointed out the dangers of enjoining what God has not strictly forbidden:

"Rome began by enjoining what God had not forbidden, and she ended by forbidding what He had explicitly enjoined." GC 289

The argument that the Bible permits that which it does not explicitly forbid sends us down a very **dangerous slippery slope**. Just to take one example, the historical evidence indicates that the early church began celebrating **sunrise services** in **commemoration of the resurrection** at first on Easter Sunday and later every Sunday. I have found **no clear Biblical evidence** that **condones or forbids** such a practice. And yet in a very **short period** of time the church that enjoined what the Bible did not forbid ended up forbidding that which the Bible clearly commands—the **observance of the Sabbath**.

Just because the **Bible does not forbid** something does not mean that **it is right**. The Bible does not forbid **women's ordination** but its **unanimous testimony** is that the practice is reserved for **qualified men**. There is **not even one example** in all the Bible of a woman who was **ordained** to a position of leadership in Israel or in the church.

Seminary Document and Headship

The **Seminary document** repeatedly makes statements such as these:

- Christ is the **only** Head of the Church
- Christ is the **sole** Head of the Church
- No human can **replace** Christ as the Head
- No human leader, then, may rightfully assume **a headship role** within the Church
- Since Christ is the **only Head of the Church, no other can be head of the Church**. That is, headship in the Church is **unique to Christ** and is **non-transferable**.
- It is unscriptural to speak of **any kind** of headship in the Church **apart** from that of Christ.
- There is **no third category** between the Head and body of Christ

We can agree with much of what the Seminary document affirms. We agree that, in an absolute sense, Christ is the **only** Head of the Church. We agree that no one person can **replace** Him as **the** Head. We concur that no **individual person** can assume **the** Headship role of Christ in the Church. We agree that the Headship of Christ is **unique** and that **His** position as absolute Head of the Church is non-transferable. And we certainly would never deny that there cannot be any kind of headship in the church **apart** from Christ.

But the problem with the Seminary's statement is that it denies that there can be heads/leaders in the Church under the absolute and irreplaceable Headship of Christ.

Ellen White: Christ is the Only Head

The **Seminary document** quotes **Ellen White** as corroborating evidence to show that Christ is the only head of the Church:

*"Christ is the only Head of the church. He only has the right to demand of man **unlimited obedience** to His requirements." 21MR 274*

*"Peter [**one person**] was not honored as **the head** of the church." DA 817*

*"God has never given a hint in His word that He has appointed **any man [singular]** to be the head of the church. The doctrine of **papal supremacy** is directly opposed to the teachings of the Scriptures. The pope can have no power over Christ's church except by **usurpation**." GC 51*

Pioneers in the Context of the Papacy

It will be noticed that Ellen White's statements focus on the individual usurpation of Christ's position as the Head of the Church. No one individual can claim to take the place of Christ as the Head. The pioneers argued against the papacy for usurping Christ's position as Head of the Church:

"THE claim of the headship of the Church of Christ, or of "the regency of God on earth," as is claimed by the pope and for the pope—either of these logically demands that he shall claim infallibility also." {September 27, 1894 ATJ, AMS 297.3}

"Yet the claim of the Papacy is, that a man is head of the church of Christ. The claim of the Catholic Church is that the head of that Church is the head of the church of Christ. The claim of the Church of Rome is that the Bishop of Rome is head of the church of Christ—in the place of Christ—as the "representative," the "substitute," the "vicar," the "regent," of Christ." {November 22, 1894 ATJ, PTUK 741}

When Ellen White affirms that Christ is the sole head of the church she does so in the context of individuals who seek to usurp the position of the Head. She is not referring to heads exercising their legitimate roles under the leadership of the legitimate Head. Those who are opposed to the ordination of women are not claiming that men are THE head or LEADER but rather heads or leaders under the absolute HEAD or LEADER.

Only One Teacher

A recent paper by Ty Gibson has brought out the point that every single text in the New Testament points to Jesus as the only head of the church. Although this is technically true we must examine what Ty Gibson left out of his paper!

Jesus explicitly stated that we should call no man 'Rabbi' ('teacher' in Hebrew) because there is only one teacher, Christ (Matthew 23:8). Does this mean there can be no human teachers because Christ is the only teacher? Obviously not because we are told that the bishop must be apt to teach—the verbal form of the word 'teacher' (1 Timothy 2:12).

The fact that Jesus is the sole teacher does not mean that there cannot be teachers under His absolute authority and leadership. Jesus here is talking in the context of usurpation and abuse of power by the scholars and ministers of His day and not the legitimate teachers.

With regards to not calling any man teacher, Ellen White explains:

"Jesus impressed upon the people that they were to give no man a title of honor indicating his control of their conscience or their faith." DA 613

Only One Father

Jesus also stated that we should call **no man our father** because we only have one Father, God. And yet the apostle Paul in **1 Corinthians 4:15** (NIV) refers to himself as father of the **congregations at Corinth**:

*“Even though you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus **I became your father** through the gospel.”*

When referring to this verse, Ellen White once again underlines that Jesus was referring to the **abuse of power** when Jesus stated that we should not call any man our ‘Father’:

*“In such plain words the Saviour revealed the selfish ambition that was ever reaching for **place and power**, displaying a mock humility, while the heart was filled with avarice and envy.” DA 613*

It is clear that God is the Father in the **absolute sense** of the word and his ministers are fathers in a **derived sense**. Religious leaders should not attempt to **take the place** of the Father!

When Ellen White refers to Christ as the sole or only head it is the context that no one has the **right to usurp** His position as **THE** head. He is not saying that there cannot be legitimate heads under his absolute authority as Sole Head.

Only One Foundation

One of my favorite hymns is: “The Church has One Foundation ‘tis Jesus Christ our Lord”. These words obviously reflect the theology of the apostle Paul who affirmed that the church has **only one** foundation, Jesus Christ:

1 Corinthians 3:11

*“For **no other foundation** can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is **Jesus Christ**.”*

But in another place the apostle Paul stated that the church was built on the **foundation** of the **apostles and prophets**:

Ephesians 2:20

*“... having been built on the foundation of the **apostles and prophets**, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.”*

Is Paul talking out of both sides of his mouth? Who is the foundation of the Church? Is it Christ or is it the apostles and the prophets? There is no contradiction in saying that Christ is the only foundation and the apostles and prophets are foundational because the apostles and prophets give witness to Jesus.

The Leaders of Israel

In the Old Testament Christ was the **invisible** Head/Leader of Israel and Moses was the **visible leader**:

*"Moses was their visible **leader**, while Christ stood at the **head** of the armies of Israel, their invisible **Leader**." Confrontation, p. 25*

In the Old Testament we are repeatedly told that Moses was the leader in Israel and under his leadership there were heads. These heads were actually heads of Christ through Moses.

Exodus 18:25

*"And Moses chose able **men** out of all Israel, and made them **heads** over the people: **rulers** of thousands, **rulers** of hundreds, **rulers** of fifties, and **rulers** of tens."*

Deuteronomy 1:15

*"So I took the **heads** of your tribes, wise and knowledgeable men, and made them **heads** over you, **leaders** of thousands, **leaders** of hundreds, **leaders** of fifties, **leaders** of tens, and **officers** for your tribes. "*

Numbers 13:3

*"So Moses sent them from the Wilderness of Paran according to the command of the Lord, all of them **men** who were **heads** of the children of Israel."*

Ellen White comments about **Exodus 18:25** and she explains that the word 'heads' means 'leaders':

*"Solemn are the responsibilities resting upon those who are called to act as **leaders** in the church of God on earth. In the days of the **theocracy**, when Moses was endeavoring to carry alone burdens so heavy that he would soon have worn away under them, he was counseled by Jethro to plan for a wise distribution of responsibilities . . .*

Ellen White then applied what happened in the days of Moses to **today's church**:

*The time and strength of those who in the providence of God have been placed in **leading positions of responsibility in the church** should be spent in dealing with the weightier matters demanding special wisdom and largeness of heart. It is not in the order of God that such **men** should be appealed to for the adjustment of minor matters that others are well qualified to handle . . .*

*Later, when choosing seventy elders to share with him the responsibilities of **leadership**, Moses was careful to select, as his helpers, **men** possessing dignity, sound judgment, and experience. In his charge to these **elders** at the time of their **ordination**, he outlined some of the qualifications that fit **a man** to be a wise **ruler** in the church." AA 92-94*

Regarding Exodus 18:25, Ellen White explains the experience of Moses and then writes:

*"This counsel is **for us**. It should be heeded by our responsible **men**."*

*"Since His ascension Christ has carried forward His work on the earth by chosen ambassadors, through whom He speaks to the children of men and ministers to their needs. The **great Head***

of the church superintends His work through the instrumentality of men ordained by God to act as His representatives.” AA 360

1 Corinthians 11:3

1 Corinthians 11:3 clearly states that men have headship over women in the context of ecclesiastical congregational worship. Notably, this verse is totally absent from the Seminary document:

“But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.”

It is clear that there are three heads here: God, Christ and the man. God is the only one who does not have a head over him and the woman is the only one who is head of no one. This text is not describing the headship of the man over the woman in the home but rather in a congregational setting. But the headship of man in both the home and in the church is subject to the headship of Christ and the headship of Christ is subject to the headship of the Father. Would anyone dare say that the Father is not the Head of the church through Christ? Would anyone dare say that Christ is not the Head of the woman through the headship of the man?

In this context, Kevin Paulson has made an important statement: “If in fact male headship in the Church is a usurpation of Christ’s exclusive claim to headship among His followers, why isn’t the same true with the home? Isn’t Christ as much the Lord of the home as He is of the church? Why is male headship in the home not an infringement on the ultimate headship of Christ, while male headship in the church supposedly is?” Regarding this Ellen White wrote:

“The Lord Jesus has not been correctly represented in His relation to the church by many husbands in their relation to their wives, for they do not keep the way of the Lord. They declare that their wives must be subject to them in everything. But it was not the design of God that the husband should have control, as head of the house, when he himself does not submit to Christ. He must be under the rule of Christ that he may represent the relation of Christ to the church. If he is a coarse, rough, boisterous, egotistical, harsh, and overbearing man, let him never utter the word that the husband is the head of the wife, and that she must submit to him in everything; for he is not the Lord, he is not the husband in the true significance of the term . . . ”AH 117

If Christ is the invisible Head of the home through a husband who is in the Lord, why can’t Christ be the invisible Head of the church through the leadership of the man who is in the Lord?

Delegation ‘in His Stead’

Ananias was ‘in Christ’s stead’:

“In this case Ananias represents Christ, and also represents Christ’s ministers upon the earth, who are appointed to act in His stead. In Christ’s stead Ananias touches the eyes of Saul, that they may receive sight. In Christ’s stead he places his hands upon him, and, as he prays in Christ’s name, Saul receives the Holy Ghost. All is done in the name and by the

authority of Christ. Christ is the **fountain**; the church is the **channel** of communication." AA 122

"Since His ascension, Christ the **great Head** of the church, has carried forward His work in the world by **chosen ambassadors**, through whom He speaks to the children of men, and ministers to their needs. The position of those who have been called of God to labor in word and doctrine for the upbuilding of His Church is one of grave responsibility. **In Christ's stead** they are to beseech men and women to be reconciled to God; and they can fulfill their mission only as they receive wisdom and power from above." GW 13

"While Christ is the minister in the sanctuary above, he is also, through his **delegates**, the **minister** of his church on earth. He speaks to the people **through chosen men**, and carries forward his work **through them**, as when, in the days of his humiliation, he moved **visibly** upon the earth. Although centuries have passed, the lapse of time has not changed his parting promise to his disciples. "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." [Matthew 28:20] From Christ's ascension to the present day, **men ordained of God**, deriving their **authority from him**, have become teachers of the faith. Christ, the True Shepherd, **superintends** his work through the instrumentality of these **under-shepherds**. Thus the position of those who labor in word and doctrine becomes very important. **In Christ's stead** they beseech the people to be reconciled to God. The people should not regard their **ministers** as mere public speakers and orators, but as **Christ's ambassadors**, receiving their wisdom and power **from the great Head of the church**. To slight and disregard the word spoken by **Christ's representative**, is showing disrespect, not only to the man, but also **to the Master** who has sent him. He is **in Christ's stead**; and the voice of the Savior should be heard in **his representative**." GW92, p. 11

Shepherd and Shepherds

Jesus is called the **Great/Chief shepherd** (Hebrews 13:20; 1 Peter 5:1-4) If there is a Great Shepherd there must be **under shepherds** who are under His command. Ellen White uses the expression 'Great Shepherd' and 'Chief Shepherd' interchangeably. There cannot be a **chief** without ones who **follow the chief**.

"Christ remains the **true minister** of His church, but He **delegates** His power to His **under-shepherds** [because He is the **Chief Shepherd**], to His chosen ministers, who have the treasure of His grace in earthen vessels. **God superintends** the affairs of His servants, and they are placed in His work by **divine appointment**" (ST, April 7, 1890)

"The minister is to be **a shepherd**. Our Redeemer is called the **chief** Shepherd . . . But the chief Shepherd has his **under-shepherds**, whom he has **delegated** to care for his sheep and lambs." RH August 23, 1902

"God is seeking to make His church the continued incarnation of Christ. The **gospel ministers** are the **under-shepherds**. Christ is the **divine shepherd**. The members of the church are the working agencies of the Lord. His church will stand out prominently. It is the Lord's body. With all its working forces it must become one with the **great Head**." 7MR 91 2727

Commander and Head

We are that when the great controversy began in heaven Jesus stood at the **HEAD** of the heavenly hosts as their **COMMANDER**:

*"The heavenly universe are marshaled for the conflict, with Christ, the **Commander** of the forces of heaven, **at their head**." RH, April 12, 1906*

And yet under the leadership of Jesus there were also **commanding** angels who acted as **heads** under the leadership of **THE HEAD**:

*"All heaven seemed in commotion. The angels were marshaled in companies, each division with a higher **commanding** angel **at its head**." EW 145*

When Jesus **was arrested** in the Garden of Gethsemane we are told that:

*"Many companies of holy angels, each with a tall **commanding** angel **at their head**, were sent to witness the scene." EW 168*

The fact that Jesus was the **Commanding Head** of the angelic hosts did not mean that under His leadership, **commanding heads** were not necessary! When Jesus ascended to heaven, "the **commanders** of the angel hosts" were present to receive Him (DA 834). The question might legitimately be asked: Does the existence of a **Commanding Head** mean that there can be no commanding heads?

Stephen at the Head

Ellen White makes it clear that Stephen stood **at the head** of the seven deacons as their supervisor:

*"Stephen was **chosen first**; he was a Jew by birth and religion, but spoke the Greek language, and was conversant with the customs and manners of the Greeks. He was therefore considered the most proper person to **stand at the head** and have **supervision** of the disbursement of the funds appropriated to the widows, orphans, and the worthy poor." The Story of Redemption, p. 260*

At the Head of the Work

On repeated occasions Ellen White referred to those who are **leaders** in God's cause as **heads**. Several examples follow:

*"Faithful and picked men are needed at the **head of the work**." 2T 467, 468*

*"The man **at the head** of any work in God's cause is to be a **man** of intelligence, a **man** capable of managing large interests successfully, a **man** of even temper, Christlike forbearance, and perfect self-control. **He** only whose heart is transformed by the grace of Christ can be a proper **leader**." Medical Ministry, pp. 164, 165*

*"It is Satan's plan to weaken the faith of God's people in the Testimonies. Satan knows how to make his attacks. He works upon minds to excite jealousy and dissatisfaction toward those **at the head** of the work." Counsels to the Church, p. 93*

*"Let those **at the head of the work** move cautiously, refusing to bury the cause of God in debt. Let no one move recklessly, heedlessly, thinking, without knowing, that all will be well." 7T 283, 284*

*"**God is at the head of the work**, and He will set everything in order. If matters need **adjusting at the head** of the work, God will attend to that, and work to right every wrong. Let us have faith that God is going to carry the noble ship that bears the people of God safely into port." The Faith I Live By, p. 282*

*"But if all will learn to depend upon God for themselves, many dangers that assail the one who stands **at the head of the work** will be averted. **If he errs**, if he permits human influence to sway his judgment, or yields to temptation, he can be corrected and helped by his brethren. And those who learn to go to God for themselves for help and counsel are learning lessons that will be of the highest value to them." GW9, p. 235*

*"While you should endeavor to labor in harmony with the instructions of those at the **head of the work**, many unforeseen circumstances will arise for which they could make no provision." GW 305*

Notice that Ellen White does recognize that our institutions have **more than one head**:

*"The cross is the center of all religious institutions. These institutions are to be under the control of the Spirit of God; in no institution is any **one man** to be the **sole** head. The divine mind has **men for every place**." {6T 241*

Let's draw a human comparison. At **Secrets Unsealed** we have three **department heads**. There is a production **head**, a marketing **head** and a distribution **head**. But as president I stand at the head of the heads. Are the department heads unnecessary because I am the head or leader? Of course not! The word 'head' in this case is synonymous with 'leader' and under the leadership of the leader there are leaders. What is so difficult to understand about this?

Home and Church

Is wise and responsible **male headship** in the home a **pre-requisite** for wise and responsible **male leadership** in the church? Those who favor the ordination of women claim that the answer is no, but what does the **Bible and Spirit of Prophecy** evidence say?

First Timothy 3:1-6

*"This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. 2 A bishop then must be blameless, **the husband of one wife**, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; 3 not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but*

gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; 4 one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence 5 (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?).”

Titus 1:5-9

“For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you—6 if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. 7 For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, 8 but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled, 9 holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.”

Several remarks are in order:

- Some have correctly stated that the word ‘man’ in **1 Timothy 3:1** is an interpretation rather than a translation because the text literally reads, ‘if anyone’. Although this might be technically true, the context clearly indicates that Paul was referring to males.
- It is also claimed that the expression ‘husband of one wife’ is not gender specific and can refer to ‘husbands of one wife’ or ‘wives of one husband’. But this ignores two facts: First, the words *aner* (husband) and *gune* (wife) are very gender specific. Second, Paul used the expression ‘wife of one husband’ when he referred to the condition for widows to receive financial aid from the church:

“Do not let a widow under sixty years old be taken into the number, and not unless she has been the wife of one man.” (1 Timothy 5:9)

If ‘husband of one wife’ is not gender specific then ‘wife of one husband’ must not be either. But clearly ‘wife of one husband’ refers to female widows.

- The words *aner* (‘husband’) and *gune* (‘wife’) are the same ones that appear in **Ephesians 5:25** where Paul states that husbands (*aner*) should love their wives (*gune*)—obviously very gender specific
- The passage in **Titus is referring to elders**. There is no evidence in the **New Testament** or in **Adventist history** that any women were ever ordained as elders.
- The majority of those who belonged to TOSC agreed that the husband is the head in the context of the home. According to the **Timothy passage** the bishop is to rule (same word used in **1 Timothy 5:17**) his house wisely. This cannot refer to the wife because the wife has not been placed to rule the house.

Ellen White makes it abundantly clear that wise rulership of the home qualifies a man to be a wise ruler in the Church. Notice the number of times that Ellen White uses the masculine personal pronoun:

“He who is engaged in the work of the gospel ministry must be faithful in his family life. It is as essential that as a father he should improve the talents God has given him for the purpose

of making the home a symbol of the heavenly family, as that in the work of the ministry, he should make use of his God given powers to win souls for the church. As the priest in the home, and as the ambassador of Christ in the church, he should exemplify in his life the character of Christ. He must be faithful in watching for souls as one that must give an account. In his service there must be seen no carelessness and inattentive work. God will not serve with the sins of men who have not a clear sense of the sacred responsibility involved in accepting a position as pastor of a church. He who fails to be a faithful, discerning shepherd in the home, will surely fail of being a faithful shepherd of the flock of God in the church." Manuscript 42, 1903, pp. 1, 2 ("The Training of Children," typed May 4, 1903) 6MR 49

"The family of the one suggested for office should be considered. Are they in subjection? Can the man rule his own house with honor? What character have his children? Will they do honor to the father's influence? If he has no tact, wisdom, or power of godliness at home in managing his own family, it is safe to conclude that the same defects will be carried into the church, and the same unsanctified management will be seen there. It will be far better to criticize the man before he is put into office than afterward, better to pray and counsel before taking the decisive step than to labor to correct the consequences of a wrong move." 5T 618

"The qualifications of an elder are plainly stated by the apostle Paul: "If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God, not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." 5MR 449

If a man does not show wisdom in the management of the church in his own house, how can he show wisdom in the management of the larger church outside? How can he bear the responsibilities which mean so much, if he cannot govern his own children? Wise discrimination is not shown in this matter. God's blessing will not rest upon the minister who neglects the education and training of his children. He has a sacred trust, and he should in no case set before church members a defective example in the management of his home." 5MR 449 (1901)

Pioneer Statements

Gerry Chudleigh, publisher of our Pacific Union Recorder, along with others, have claimed that the idea of male headship was foreign to the Adventist Church until Samuele Bacchiocchi introduced the idea in the late 1980's. However this is simply inaccurate. The idea of male headship is firmly contained in [1] Scripture (1 Corinthians 11:3), has been the [2] view of the Christian church for two thousand years and was the view of the [3] Adventist pioneers. In the times of Ellen White the idea of male headship was already the established position of the church:

Daniel T. Bourdeau, The Review and Herald, "Spiritual Gifts," December 2, 1862:

"These remarks of the apostle are a standing rebuke against those unquiet and self-sufficient women who are unwilling to submit to their husbands in the Lord, and have a disposition to

take the **lead in meetings**, in the presence of brethren who are **qualified to rule** the church. It is a **shame for women to thus lead out**. "If they would learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home."

"Here [1 Timothy 2:9-13] again we have the idea of subjection. Paul does not suffer [allow] a woman to teach, or to **usurp authority** over the man; and we do not learn from the Scriptures that women **were ever ordained** as apostles, evangelists, or elders; neither do we believe that they should teach **as such**. Yet they may act an important part in speaking the truth to others."

On **December 19, 1878** an editorial appeared in **Signs of the Times** where **J. H. Waggoner** clearly stated the view of the church of that time on the issue of women's ordination to the church office of 'elder':

"The **divine arrangement**, even **from the beginning**, is this, that the **man is the head** of the woman. Every relation is disregarded or abused in this lawless age. But **the Scriptures** always maintain this order in the family relation. 'For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church.' Eph. 5:23 Man is entitled to certain privileges that are not given to woman; and he is subjected to some duties and burdens from which the woman is exempt. A woman may pray, prophesy, exhort, and comfort the church, but **she cannot occupy the position of a pastor or ruling elder**. This would be looked upon as **usurping authority** over the man, which is here [1 Timothy 2:12] prohibited." J. H. Waggoner, "A Woman's Place in the Gospel," **The Signs of the Times**, December 19, 1878

In **1895** a reader of **Signs of the Times** asked the following question of the editor:

"Should women be elected to offices in the church when there are enough brethren?"

Here is the **editor's response**:

"If by this is meant the office of **elder**, we should say **at once, No**. But there are offices in the church which women can fill acceptably, and oftentimes there are found sisters in the church who are **better qualified** for this than brethren, such offices, for instance as church clerk, treasurer, librarian of the tract society, etc., as well as the office of deaconess, **assisting the deacons** in looking after the poor, and in doing such other duties as would naturally fall to their lot. The qualifications for church elder are set forth in **1 Tim. 3:1-7 and in Titus 1:7-9 [in other word, in Scripture]**. **We do not believe that it is in God's plan** to give to women the **ordained offices** of the church. By this we do not mean to depreciate their labors, service, or devotion. The sphere of woman is **equal [italics in the original]** to that of man. She was made a help meet, or fit, for man, but that does **not [italics in original]** mean that her sphere **[or role] is identical [italics in original]** to that of man's. The interests of the church and the world generally would be better served if the **distinctions given in God's word** were regarded." **Signs of the Times**, "Question Corner # 176: Who Should Be Church Officers?" January 1895

Will the NAD ABIDE BY THE VOTE OF THE WORLD CHURCH?

One final question must be asked: Will the North American Division be willing to respectfully abide by the vote of the world church if the vote does not go their way? If not, what will they do? Will they continue to ordain women? Will they attempt to secede from the world church? Ellen White has wisely counseled:

“Satan well knows that success can only attend order and harmonious action. He well knows that everything connected with Heaven is in perfect order, that subjection and perfect discipline mark the movements of the angelic host. It is his studied effort to lead professed Christians just as far from Heaven's arrangement as he can; therefore he deceives even the professed people of God, and makes them believe that order and discipline are enemies to spirituality; that the only safety for them is to let each pursue his own course, and to remain especially distinct from bodies of Christians who are united, and are laboring to establish discipline and harmony of action. All the efforts made to establish order are considered dangerous, a restriction of rightful liberty, and hence are feared as popery. These devoted souls consider it a virtue to boast of their freedom to think and act independently. They will not take any man's say-so. They are amenable to no man. I was shown that it is Satan's special work to lead men to feel that it is God's order for them to strike out for themselves, and choose their own course, independent of their brethren.” CET 201